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# AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHILOLOGY

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VOL. XXX, 4.

WHOLE NO. 120.

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## I.—RECOGNITION SCENES IN GREEK LITERATURE.

When father or mother and child, husband and wife, brother and sister are separated by fortune for many years and then brought unexpectedly together again, the problem of mutual recognition is a fascinating one, which taxes the resources of any literary artist who attempts to solve it in a way to satisfy his audience of hearers or readers. Any such recognition, being a surprise, renders the plot of a literary composition complex instead of simple. The lines of action before and after recognition must be totally different. This is an advantage, as Aristotle points out in his *Poetics*. "A perfect tragedy", he says (xiii, 2),<sup>1</sup> "should be arranged not on the simple but on the complex plan", and the same is true of an epic poem (xxiv, 1-2). "The *Iliad* is simple, and the *Odyssey* complex, for recognition scenes run through it", and recognition scenes, according to Aristotle, form one of the three essential parts of any effective epic or tragic plot, the other two being "reversal of the situation" and "tragic incident" (xi, 6; xxiv, 1).

"Recognition", says Aristotle in definition of the term, "is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune. The best form of recognition is coincident with a reversal of the situation, as in the *Oedipus*. There are indeed other forms. Even inanimate things of the most trivial kind may sometimes be objects of recognition. Again, we may recognize or discover whether a person has done a thing or not. But the recognition which is most intimately connected with the plot and action is the recognition of persons" (xi, 2-3).

<sup>1</sup> The *Poetics* is cited throughout in Professor Butcher's translation.

Such recognition of persons Aristotle, with all Greek literature at his command, thus classifies and arranges in order of artistic excellence (xvi): "First, the least artistic form, which, from poverty of wit, is most commonly employed—recognition by signs (*διὰ τῶν σημείων*). Of these some are congenital,—such as 'the spear which the earth-born race bear on their bodies', or the 'stars' introduced by Carcinus in his *Thyestes*. Others are acquired after birth; and of these some are bodily marks, as scars; some external tokens, as necklaces, or the little ark in the *Tyro* by which the discovery is effected. Even these admit of more or less skilful treatment. Thus in the recognition of *Odysseus* by his scar, the discovery is made in one way by the nurse, in another by the herdsmen. The use of tokens for the express purpose of proof—and, indeed, any formal proof with or without tokens—is a less artistic mode of recognition. A better kind is that which comes about by a turn of incident, as in the Bath Scene in the *Odyssey*.

"Next come the recognitions invented at will by the poet, and on that account wanting in art. For example, *Orestes* in the *Iphigenia* reveals the fact that he is *Orestes*. She, indeed, makes herself known by the letter; but he, by speaking himself, and saying what the poet, not what the plot requires. . . . Another similar instance is the 'voice of the shuttle' in the *Tereus* of *Sophocles*.

"The third kind depends on memory, when the sight of some object awakens a feeling: as in the *Cyprians* of *Dicaeogenes*, where the hero breaks into tears on seeing the picture; or again in the 'Lay of *Alcinous*', where *Odysseus*, hearing the minstrel play the lyre, recalls the past and weeps; and hence the recognition.

"The fourth kind is by process of reasoning. Thus in the *Choephoroi*:—"Some one resembling me has come: no one resembles me but *Orestes*: therefore *Orestes* has come'. Such too is the discovery made by *Iphigenia* in the play of *Polyidus* the Sophist. It was a natural reflexion for *Orestes* to make, 'So I too must die at the altar like my sister'. So, again, in the *Tydeus* of *Theodectes*, the father says, 'I came to find my son, and I lose my own life'. So too in the *Phineidae*: the women, on seeing the place, inferred their fate:—"Here we are doomed to die, for here we were cast forth'. Again, there is a composite kind of recognition involving false inference on the part of one of the characters, as in the *Odysseus Disguised as a Messenger* . . .

"But, of all recognitions, the best is that which arises from the incidents themselves, where the startling discovery is made by natural means. Such is that in the *Oedipus* of Sophocles, and in the *Iphigenia*; for it was natural that *Iphigenia* should wish to dispatch a letter. These recognitions alone dispense with the artificial aid of tokens or amulets. Next come the recognitions by process of reasoning."

We are fortunate enough to possess the *Odyssey* and three of the twelve tragedies from which Aristotle takes his examples of five degrees of excellence in the literary conduct of recognition. No less than nine recognition scenes in dramatic poetry which he selects for special mention out of the complete repertory at his command have not been preserved for us. We have, however, not only the entire *Odyssey*, with its eleven recognition scenes, from which Aristotle selects only three for the purposes of his illustration, but also four tragedies with recognition scenes of which he makes no mention, viz. the *Electra* of Sophocles, and the *Electra*, *Ion*, and *Helen* of Euripides. We can pass judgment, therefore, upon eighteen recognition scenes in Greek literature, and, since some scenes bring double and even triple recognitions, upon twenty-eight actual recognitions. It is the object of this paper to review and briefly describe all these recognition scenes and recognitions, to state what little is known or may be safely inferred about the nine scenes cited by Aristotle but lost to us, and then determine how far the classification and relative estimate of them by Aristotle is satisfactory and of permanent value.

# I.

Aristotle's remark about the *Odyssey* is strikingly true; recognition scenes run all through the poem. There are three in the first half, before *Odysseus* gets back to *Ithaca*, and eight in the second half, after the hero's return. The first two are spontaneous and natural recognitions of *Telemachus* the son of *Odysseus* by *Nestor* first (iii, 75-125), and afterwards by *Helen* (iv, 76-154). This is a recognition of every day occurrence now, and needs no comment, except to point out the simple and pure beauty of the scenes. Old familiars of the father recognize the son because he is so like the father in looks, speech, and motions, although they have never seen the son before. There is a third recognition in this second recognition scene,—that of the slow-witted *Menelaus*, whose curiosity has to be roused by the weeping

of Telemachus at the mention of his father before he is ready to accept the intuitive recognition of that father's son by the nimble-witted Helen. Such simple, direct, spontaneous recognitions as those of Telemachus by Nestor and Helen, are not distinguished by Aristotle, though they may be somewhat arbitrarily placed in his third class (*διὰ μνήμης*), since they certainly "depend on memory". To the same class belongs, according to Aristotle's illustrations of it, the recognition of Telemachus by Menelaus, for Telemachus "recalls the past and weeps; and hence the recognition". The same is true of Teucer in the Cyprians of Dicaeogenes, as we may safely infer, though the play is lost. Returning to Salamis with a company of Cyprians, who constitute the chorus of the play, Teucer weeps at sight of a picture of his father Telamon, and is consequently recognized by his nephew, Eurysaces. So Odysseus, in the 'Lay of Alcinous' (*Od.* viii, 521 ff.), "hearing the minstrel play the lyre, recalls the past and weeps; and hence the recognition."

This last illustration of Aristotle is taken from the third recognition scene of the *Odyssey*. The much buffeted Odysseus has reached the charmed isle of the Phaeacians, where he is sumptuously entertained, though still, after the good heroic fashion, incognito. Heroic politeness forbids that hosts should press a guest to break his incognito, though heroic curiosity, like heroic hospitality, is on a grand scale. But twice, at hearing the Phaeacian bard sing of the dooms of the Achaeans who went to Ilium, the unknown guest has burst into tears, and the second time his sorrow is so poignant that the generous host feels justified in demanding the name of his god-like guest. Thereupon follows the annunciation, made at a high point of interest, "I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, known unto all men for my craft", and then the long and immortal tale of adventure. A famous hero, wandering incognito, is recognized by hosts who never saw him before, because his actions indirectly prove him the one he "boasts to be."

The eight recognition scenes of the second half of the *Odyssey* differ from the three of the first half in that they bring about recognitions between persons who have once been intimately associated and then separated for a long term of years. This distinction is not made by Aristotle, though he speaks of recognition in the broader sense of a "change from ignorance to knowledge in a particular situation", or of "discovery whether a

person has done a thing or not". Odysseus has been twenty years from home; ten in the wars round Ilium, and ten in the adventures of his return. He left an infant son, Telemachus, who has now come to man's estate, and proved himself a worthy son of his father by rebuking the wanton suitors for his mother's hand, assuming the management of his father's realm, and making a long and perilous journey to Nestor and Menelaus in Peloponnesus for tidings of his father. The poem brings the father from his twenty years of wars and wanderings, the son from his first adventures, back to Ithaca at the same time, and both, from fear of the suitors, seek out the secluded hut of the faithful swineherd Eumaeus, Odysseus cunningly disguised as a beggar. Even Eumaeus does not recognize him. But the plot of the poem requires that father and son shall know each other, here in this swineherd's hut, away from palace and all family associations. How shall this double recognition be effected?

The sixteenth book of the *Odyssey* opens with the disguised Odysseus and the swineherd getting breakfast at the lodge. The beggar has given himself out to be a wandering Cretan. Up comes Telemachus from his secretly returning ship. With masterly exposition the poem establishes his identity, and the father, still retaining his own disguise, recognizes his son by what Aristotle calls the best of all recognitions, "that which arises from the incidents themselves, where the startling discovery is made by natural means" (xvi, 8). "As Telemachus drew near,<sup>1</sup> the dogs that love to bark began to wag their tails, but did not bark. Royal Odysseus, noticing, spake these winged words: 'Eumaeus, certainly a friend is coming, at least a man you know; for the dogs here do not bark, but wag their tails, and I hear the tramp of feet'". The exquisitely loyal greetings given the newcomer by the swineherd, and the princely replies, convince the onlooking beggar (and through him the never ending readers and hearers of the poem) beyond shadow of doubt that his son is before him,—the son whom he last saw a babe in arms. The father has recognized the son in the most perfect artistic manner, by means of indirect, not direct proof, and without the use of tokens or signs. But how shall the son be brought to recognize the father whom he has seen only with babe's eyes?

Here the artistic problem deepens, and here the art of the poet

<sup>1</sup> The *Odyssey* is cited in Professor Palmer's translation.

falters, at just the point where, as we shall see, the art of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides falters, viz. in the case of immediate double or mutual personal recognition, where recognition by artificial means follows that by natural means,—the direct and less artistic method of proof the indirect and perfect method. In the case now before us, the stage is cleared, so to speak, for the recognition of the father by the son, when the swineherd is sent up to the distant palace by Telemachus with messages for his mother. Then the patron goddess, Athene, calls Odysseus, all disguised, outside the lodge, and bids him tell his story to his son, and with him plan destruction to the suitors in the palace. With magic wand she then transforms the ragged beggar into a stately hero of such beauty and splendor that at his appearing again inside the lodge Telemachus is awe-struck, "and reverently turns his eyes aside, fearing it was a god". He even prays to the stranger who has been so marvellously transformed. But Odysseus answers: "I am no god. I am your father, him for whom you sighed and suffered long, enduring outrage at the hands of men. . . . But Telemachus, for he did not yet believe it was his father, finding his words, once more made answer thus: 'No, you are not Odysseus, not my father! Some god beguiles me. For lately you were old and meanly clad; now you are like the gods who hold the open sky' . . . Then wise Odysseus answered him and said: 'Telemachus, it is not right, when here your father stands, to marvel overmuch and to be so amazed. Be sure no other Odysseus ever will appear; but as you see me, it is I, I who have suffered long and wandered long, and now in the twentieth year come to my native land. This is the work of Athene,—she has power, she makes me what she will, now like a beggar, and again a youthful man in fair attire. Easily can the gods who hold the open sky give glory to a mortal man or give him shame'. So saying, he sat down; whereat Telemachus, throwing his arms round his good father, began to sob and pour forth tears",—and the recognition is accomplished. The task was such a hard one that the poet felt obliged to resort to miraculous power. It is, to be sure, the same miraculous power that presides over all the marvels of the long romance, saving her hero from all the perils which the poem could only include by associating them with that hero's return; but still it is a *deus ex machina* device. It cuts the knot it cannot loose. It is the marvel of the transformation which forces Telemachus to admit

the whilom beggar's claim to be his father. In this case, then, the marvel becomes a sign (*σημείον*) or token (*σήμα*), and the recognition must be placed in Aristotle's first and lowest class, since it is brought about by direct and conscious proof. It is, however, a choice specimen of this lowest class.

The fifth recognition scene in the *Odyssey* is of the instantaneous, spontaneous kind for which the classification of Aristotle makes no special provision, like the first two, the recognition of Telemachus by Nestor and Helen. Two old comrades, separated twenty years, at once, on meeting, triumph over time and change and know each other well,—for surely Homer's dog Argus is a person! Still in beggar's disguise and unrecognized by his guide, the good Eumaeus, Odysseus comes to the outer gates of his own palace court, whence come odors and sounds of the suitors' banqueting. "But a dog lying near lifted his head and ears. Argus it was, the dog of hardy Odysseus, whom long ago he reared but never used. Before the dog was grown, Odysseus went to sacred Ilios. In the times past young men would take him on the chase, for wild goats, deer, and hares; but now he lay neglected, his master gone away, upon the pile of dung which had been dropped before the gates by mules and oxen, and which lay there in a heap for slaves to carry off and dung the broad lands of Odysseus. Here lay the dog, this Argus, full of fleas. Yet even now, seeing Odysseus near, he wagged his tail and dropped both ears, but toward his master he had not strength to move. Odysseus, noticing, turned aside and wiped away a tear, swiftly concealing from Eumaeus what he did; then straightway thus he questioned: 'Eumaeus, it is strange this dog lies on the dunghill. His form is good; but I am not aware if he has speed of foot to match his beauty, or if he is merely what the table-dogs become which masters keep for show'. And, swine-herd Eumaeus, you answered him and said: 'Aye, truly, that is the dog of one who died afar. If he were as good in form and action as when Odysseus left him and went away to Troy, you would be much surprised to see his speed and strength. For nothing could escape him in the forest depths, no creature that he started; he was keen upon the scent. Now he has come to ill. In a strange land his master perished, and the slack women give him no more care; for slaves, when masters lose control, will not attend to duties'. So saying, Eumaeus entered the stately home and went straight down the hall among the lordly



suitors. But upon Argus fell the doom of darksome death, at the mere sight of Odysseus, after twenty years" (xvii, 290-327). Each knew the other, then, at once, master and dog, through all the disguises of years and hardship and neglect, and at the knowledge the old dog died of joy. The scene must rank first in its class.

The beggar king then enters his own palace, known only to his son. He is insulted and mocked by the riotous suitors, but shielded and defended by Telemachus and Penelope. The latter has a conference with him in the evening, since she is wont to question all comers for tidings of her husband, in which he tells her a cunning tale of his wanderings, half true, half false, but ending with positive assurances that Odysseus is still alive and will speedily return. Gladdened by these words, Penelope commends the unkempt beggar to her maid-servants for kindly treatment: "wash the stranger's feet, my women, and prepare his bed, and early in the morning bathe and anoint him well, so that indoors beside Telemachus he may await his meal, seated within the hall. And woe to him who persecutes or frets the man". Thus the poem prepares the way for its sixth and most famous recognition scene (xix, 307-507), the "Bath Scene", to which Aristotle twice alludes.

Wise Odysseus declines the comforts offered him by his unsuspecting queen; "hateful to me are robes and bright-hued rugs; here too, as always, I would rest me on a rough bed; baths for the feet give me no pleasure, and foot of mine shall not be touched by any of these maids who serve the palace,—unless indeed there be some aged woman, sober-minded, one who has borne as many sorrows as myself. It would not trouble me that such a one should touch my feet. . . . Then said to him heedful Penelope: 'Dear stranger, I have an aged woman of an understanding heart, who gently nursed and tended that unfortunate one, and took him in her arms the day his mother bore him. She, feeble as she is, shall wash your feet. Come, rise up, heedful Eurycleia, and wash a man as old as is your master. Perhaps Odysseus is already such as he, in feet and hands; for soon in times of trouble men grow old'". Then up rose Eurycleia to wash the stranger's feet, weeping at thoughts of her lost master. She sees that it is to avoid the younger women's taunts the stranger will not let them wash him. "So I will wash your feet, both for Penelope's own sake and for your own, because my

heart within is stirred by sorrow. Yet mark the words I say! Many a way-worn stranger has come hither; but one so like Odysseus I declare I never saw, as you are like him, form and voice and feet!" So the old woman took the basin "which she used for washing feet and poured in much cold water, afterwards adding warm". Then she drew near him and began to wash her master; and presently she found the scar which a boar inflicted long ago with his white tusk, when Odysseus was hunting on Parnassus. "She knew it by the touch and dropped the foot. The leg fell in the basin; the copper rang, and tilting sidewise let all the water run upon the ground. Then joy and grief together seized her breast; her two eyes filled with tears, her full voice stayed; and laying her hand upon Odysseus' chin she said: 'You really are Odysseus, my dear child, and I knew you not till I had passed my hand upon you o'er and o'er'". And then she would have told her discovery to Penelope, but the queen's eyes were holden, and Odysseus clutched his old nurse by the throat and cried: "Why, mother, will you kill me? It was yourself who nursed me at the breast; and now through many hardships I come in the twentieth year to my own native land. Though you have found me out, be silent, lest some other person in the hall may know". And thus another faithful ally is secured for the struggle with the suitors soon to come.

This is recognition by a "sign",—a bodily mark acquired after birth, as Aristotle is careful to distinguish, but we cannot follow him in calling it the least artistic form of recognition. It is on a high, almost the highest plane of artistic excellence, because the proof is conveyed indirectly, "by a turn of incident" (*ἐκ περιτελείας*) as Aristotle has it. He recognizes the redeeming quality of this principle, but gives it no force in his classification, so that superlatively good scenes are ranked with superlatively bad ones, and below inferior scenes.

For this scar of Odysseus does service in three out of the eleven recognition scenes of the *Odyssey*. In the seventh, the trusty herdsmen Eumaeus and Philoetius are convinced by it that the seeming beggar is their master (xxi, 188–244). Here the action is summary. The plot of the poem thickens. Penelope has promised her hand to him who shall bend the great bow of Odysseus for a skilful shot, and several of the suitors have vainly tried their powers. The disguised Odysseus feels the need of more allies as the supreme moment draws near, and so

follows his two faithful herdsmen out of doors, tests their loyalty, and, finding it staunch, thus declares himself: "'Lo it is I, through many grievous toils now in the twentieth year come to my native land. And I will show you too a very trusty sign (*σῆμα*), that you may know me certainly and be assured in heart,—the scar the boar dealt long ago with his white tusk'. So saying, he drew aside his rags from the great scar. And when the two beheld and understood it all, their tears burst forth; they threw their arms round wise Odysseus and passionately kissed his face and neck."

We need no telling that the art is far inferior here. The proof by the scar is direct and formal, not indirect and accidental, as in the case of the old nurse; and the herdsmen need never have been familiar, as she was, with the person of their master. It is easily the least artistic recognition of the *Odyssey*, and that which makes it so is the directness of proof. Whether the proof was direct and formal or indirect and accidental in the other three tragedies cited by Aristotle for this lowest class of recognition scenes, is unknown. But it is difficult to believe that Sophocles, in his *Tyro*, where the mother was led to recognize her grown up children by seeing the ark in which she had exposed them as infants, could have used the direct and formal method. And if Carcinus represented his Thyestes as discovered and recognized in the house of Atreus by means of the 'star', or inherited birth-mark on the shoulder of the Pelopids, the discovery was in all probability brought about "by turn of incident". About the method in which the recognition was effected in the unknown tragedy by an unknown author where the descendants of the *Sparti*, or Sown-men of Cadmus, were represented as carrying the birth-mark of a spear, we know and can infer nothing. But it is clear that by making "signs and tokens" the criterion of a class and grade of excellence in recognition scenes, Aristotle has been compelled to group together superlatively good and superlatively bad scenes. This will become even clearer as our survey continues.

The eighth recognition scene of the *Odyssey* is grim but glorious. The beggar asks to try his hand at bending the great bow. The suitors cry out against the profanation, but Telemachus and Penelope insist that the request be granted, and Eumaeus puts the weapon in the beggar's hands. The hour of doom has come. The palace doors are locked by faithful hands, the beggar

strings the bow with scarce an effort, and makes the skilful shot. And now for another mark! The ringleader of the suitors falls with an arrow piercing his neck. "‘Stranger’, the other revelers cry, ‘to your sorrow you turn your bow on men!’ They thought he had not meant to kill the man. But looking sternly on them wise Odysseus said: ‘Dogs! you have been saying all the time I never should return from out the land of Troy; now for you one and all destruction’s cords are knotted!’" (xxii, 1-41). Then they recognized the warrior whose substance they had wasted, whose servants they had outraged, whose son and wife they had mocked and tortured. His prowess with the bow, which is the "sign" or "token" in the case, his partnership with Telemachus, the discarded rags of his false beggary, and above all his awful words proved that he was the one he claimed to be. The proof, too, is brought indirectly, by a turn of incident, and therefore the scene outranks the recognition of Odysseus by Telemachus in consequence of the marvel of the transformation, with which, however, it must be grouped if "signs and tokens" were to be our only criterion.

In the ninth recognition scene of the *Odyssey* it is Penelope who must be convinced that the unsightly beggar whom all have set at naught except herself, Telemachus, and two faithful servants, but who has now slain the whole company of suitors, stands like a lion among the slain, and bids her by the mouth of Eurycleia come to him,—that this man is her lord. She is too dazed, awaking from sound sleep, to believe the assurances of Eurycleia, even though these are reinforced by the story of the scar; but she will "go down to meet her son, and see the suitors who are dead, and him who slew them". She found him who had slain the suitors sitting in the firelight by a tall pillar, looking down, waiting to see if his wife would speak to him when she should look his way. But speak she cannot; amazement so fills her heart. To her son’s chidings for thus holding aloof from her husband she can only say: "My child, my soul within is dazed with wonder. I cannot speak to him, nor ask a question, nor look him in the face. But if this is indeed Odysseus, come at last, we certainly shall know each other better than others know; for we have signs (*σήματα*) which we two understand,—signs hidden from the rest" (xxiii, 1-240). Nor will she yield, even after the gory beggar-claimant has been bathed and clothed in his royal robes, till she has put him to her secret test. "There

is no other woman", he cries, "of such stubborn spirit as to stand off from her husband who, after many grievous toils, comes in the twentieth year home to his native land. So come, good nurse, and make my bed, that I may lie alone. For certainly of iron is the heart within her breast."

"Then said to him heedful Penelope: 'Nay, sir, I am not proud, nor contemptuous of you, nor too much dazed with wonder now. I very well remember what you were when you went upon a long-oared ship away from Ithaca. However, Eurycleia, make up his massive bed *outside* that stately chamber which he himself once built. Move the massive frame *outside*, and throw the bedding on,—the fleeces, robes, and bright-hued rugs'. She said this to prove her husband". And she proved him. How, he cried in anger, could that bed be moved from out the room? No mortal man could do it. He himself had secretly built that chamber round a growing olive tree, and when the room was secret, then had lopped the branches of the olive and fashioned its trunk to be the bed-post of his bed. Starting with this he had fashioned him the bed till it was finished. No one could move it, save the olive trunk were cut asunder. This was a token (*σημα*) which he told. Then did Penelope's knees and soul grow feeble "when she recognized the tokens (*σήματα*) which Odysseus exactly told. And bursting into tears, she ran straight toward him, threw her arms about his neck and kissed his face and cried: 'Odysseus, do not scorn me! do not be angry with me! I feared some man might come and cheat me with his tale. But now, when you have clearly told the tokens of our bed, which no one else has seen, but only you and I and the one servant whom my father gave me on my coming here to keep the door of our closed chamber,—you make even my ungentle heart believe'. . . . And he began to weep, holding his loved and faithful wife. As when the welcome land appears to swimmers, . . . so welcome to her gazing eyes appeared her husband. From round his neck she never let her white arms go."

This is recognition by "tokens", tokens known only to the two who are to recognize each other, a slight variation of the method which Aristotle ranks lowest in his scale. But the Homeric poet uses it so exquisitely as to lift the scene to the highest plane of artistic excellence. This is because the proof is, after all, conveyed indirectly, through the stratagem of Penelope. And in its indirectness lies its artistic charm.

Two more recognition scenes remain in the *Odyssey*. In the tenth, Laertes, the aged father of Odysseus, who has long been living in squalid hermitage on a remote farmstead, where he could grieve for his son and grandson without molestation from enemies,—this aged father must be brought to recognize his long lost son (xxiv, 205–348). Odysseus finds him pottering in his vineyard, and first tries him with a well told tale of having entertained his son some five years since, and of now coming to the land he supposes his former guest to have reached long ago, expecting return of hospitality. Then a great cloud of grief envelopes the old man, as he confesses that his son has not yet returned. His anguish moves Odysseus to declare himself. He throws himself abruptly upon the neck of his father whose grief he has thus roused by a false tale, crying: “Lo, Father, I am he for whom you seek, now in the twentieth year come to my native land”. . . . “Then in his turn Laertes answered: ‘If you are indeed my son, Odysseus, now returned, tell me some trusty sign (*σήμα*) that so I may believe’”. Odysseus shows him the scar,—the well-used scar from the boar’s white tusk, and gives him also a “token”, or sign known only to the two, like the immovable bed-stead in the Penelope recognition scene. In this case the “token” is the exact trees of the vineyard which Laertes had given his son, when, being still a little child, he had followed his father about the garden begging for this and that. “You gave me thirteen pear-trees, ten apples, forty figs. And here you marked off fifty rows of vines to give, each one in bearing order”. And then, as before with Penelope, “Laertes’ knees grew feeble, and his very soul, when he recognized the tokens (*σήματα*) which Odysseus exactly told. Round his dear son he threw his arms”.

This recognition scene is on the lowest artistic level of signs and tokens formally demanded and directly given in formal proof. All the inherent possibilities of the situation,—and they are great, are marred by the directness of the method of proof, and so the scene partakes of the inferior quality of the whole of the twenty-fourth book. Far more summary, too, and hasty even than the seventh, is the eleventh and last recognition scene of the *Odyssey*, where the aged servant Dolius instantly recognizes Odysseus on seeing him and hearing him speak (xxiv, 391–399). This scene must, of course, be classed with that of Helen recognizing Telemachus, or Argus recognizing Odysseus,

but it is far beneath them in artistic excellence, indeed, it is evident that no artistic effort has been expended upon it.

Looking back now over these eleven recognition scenes and thirteen recognitions of the *Odyssey*, it is plain that they fall into two classes, according as proof of identity is brought, or not. To one class belong the spontaneous recognitions, without "delay", such as that of Telemachus by Helen. They are not distinguished by Aristotle, and cannot be brought into his scheme of classification. One might be tempted to borrow his designation of διὰ μνήμης for them, since such recognition is certainly "dependent on memory" (see p. 374). In Aristotle's third class, however, it is the person to be recognized who so exercises the memory as to lead to his recognition, not the person who recognizes. Another class will include those recognitions where proof of identity is brought, and these will be divided and subdivided according as the proof is brought directly, by means of "signs and tokens"; or indirectly, and either with, or without "signs and tokens". The highest artistic excellence is reached in the second division of this second class, which answers to Aristotle's last and highest class.

#### EPIC RECOGNITIONS.

##### I. Spontaneous, without "delay", without proof (*ἄνευ πίστεως*),

Telemachus by Nestor	( 1 )	p. 373
Telemachus by Helen	( 2 )	p. 373
Odysseus by Argus	( 7 )	p. 377 f.
Odysseus by Dolius	(13)	p. 383 f.

##### II. Induced by proof (*ἐκ πίστεως*),

###### A. Direct and formal, by means of "signs" (*διὰ σημείων*),

Odysseus by Telemachus	( 6 )	p. 376 f.
Odysseus by the herdsmen	( 9 )	p. 379 f.
Odysseus by Laertes	(12)	p. 383

###### B. Indirect, informal and artistic, διὰ εἰκότων, ἐκ περιπετείας,

###### (a) By means of "signs",

Odysseus by Eurycleia	( 8 )	p. 378 f.
Odysseus by the suitors	(10)	p. 380 f.
Odysseus by Penelope	(11)	p. 381 f.

###### (b) Without the use of "signs" (*ἄνευ σημείων*),

Telemachus by Menelaus	( 3 )	p. 373 f.
Odysseus by the Phaeacians	( 4 )	p. 374
Telemachus by Odysseus	( 5 )	p. 375

## II.

In five of the seven recognition scenes of the Athenian drama which have come down to us, as in the *Odyssey*, it is the great *passus* of the Trojan war which brings the necessary lapse of time. Orestes, son of Agamemnon, like Telemachus, was a babe in arms when his father set out for the war. Agamemnon left two daughters also at Mycenae: Iphigenia, of marriageable age, and Electra, who must have been eight or ten years old. After ten years absence, Agamemnon captures Ilium and returns in triumph to Mycenae, only to be treacherously murdered by his wife, Clytaemnestra, and her paramour, Aegisthus. Electra rescues her boy brother, Orestes, and sends him, in charge of a faithful paedagogue, to relatives in Phocis. Then she lives on hopes of his return in man's estate to take vengeance on his father's murderers. She waits nearly a decade, and then, under bidding of the oracle at Delphi, Orestes, with his cousin Pylades, secretly returns to do his dreadful work. The guilty pair, as well as the longing sister, are on the watch for his return.

Aeschylus, in his *Choëphori*, first dramatizes for us the recognition scene between brother and sister thus separated for ten years. It is not the main feature of his play by any means. That was the awful matricide, where Apollo's commands and the stern appetite for just vengeance strove with a son's horror at smiting the breast that had given him suck. Toward this fearful climax the action of the play hurries, as it were, and scarcely stays to have the recognition scene persuasive. It must take place somehow, this recognition; but Aeschylus seems too intent upon the deep religious problem of his play to spend himself upon the details of a minor scene.

The scene of the play is in the royal city, before the royal palace, and in the near background is the tomb of Agamemnon. In the dim light of early morning Orestes and Pylades appear at this tomb, and Orestes lays upon it as an offering a long lock of his hair. As the prayers which accompany the offering draw to an end, Electra comes forth from the palace at the head of a train of women slaves, who form the chorus of the play, all robed in black, all bearing vessels with libations for the tomb, all wailing and rending their garments. Orestes at once conjectures that the leader of the mourning band, conspicuous by her grief, is Electra, and that the libations are for the tomb at which he stands



He therefore withdraws to one side with Pylades. From the choral song which follows, and from the dialogue between Electra and her attendants, Orestes learns (and we learn) that Clytaemnestra has had an ominous dream during the night just passed, and has sent this mourning company forth with libations for the tomb of her murdered husband, hoping to propitiate his spirit. On advice of her attendants, Electra pours the libations on the tomb, as directed by her mother, but substitutes for the appeasing formulae given her, prayers to the dead and the powers beneath the earth to bring Orestes home for vengeance. Electra comes back to her attendants from the tomb where she has poured the libations, holding in her hand the lock of hair which she had found there. It is like her own hair! It is offered on Agamemnon's tomb! It must be Orestes' hair! Was it put there by him in person, or sent from afar? Lo, there are footprints also leading to the tomb, footprints of two persons! One of the footprints fits her own foot exactly! Sore bewilderment comes upon her, and pangs of anxious expectation,—when Orestes steps forth and announces himself as the Orestes for whose return she had just prayed.

(Electra) "Art thou indeed Orestes that I speak unto?"<sup>1</sup>

(Orestes) "Though thou see'st him, thou'rt slow to learn 'tis I;  
Yet when thou saw'st this lock of mourner's hair,  
And did'st the footprints track my feet had made,  
Agreeing with thine own, as brother's true,  
Then did'st thou deem in hope thou look'dst on me.  
Fit then this lock where it was cut, and see;  
See too this woven robe, thine own hands' work,  
The shuttle's stroke, and forms of beasts of chase.

(As Electra starts and would cry out for joy)

Restrain thyself, nor lose thy head for joy:

Our dearest kin within, I know, are foes to us."

Electra hereupon embraces Orestes, the recognition on both sides is complete, and the pair concoct the plot which brings the avenger inside the palace.

Orestes conjectures Electra from her issuing out of the palace at the head of a company of slaves, and his conjecture becomes a certainty when he overhears her prayers for her brother's return. This is indirect and highly artistic proof (*ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων*) of the identity of one of the two persons who are to

<sup>1</sup> Aeschylus and Sophocles are cited in Plumptre's translation.

recognize each other. But the proof to Electra of the identity of Orestes is so artificial as to be ridiculous, and easily lends itself to travesty. We can only explain the grotesqueness of it by remembering that the scene is a minor scene, preliminary to the greater scenes to follow, and also that lock of hair, and foot-prints, and woven robe were all, probably, fixed features in the ancient myth which Aeschylus dramatized. He made a dramatic best of cumbersome material. But even such charity cannot make the scene seem less than absurd, and it is astonishing to find Aristotle placing it in a class which he ranks second in point of artistic excellence. But this fourth class of Aristotle,—recognitions “by process of reasoning” (*ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ*), is not exclusive at all. None of the recognitions in his other four classes can be made without “process of reasoning”. And this recognition of Orestes by Electra in the *Choëphori* is certainly made in consequence of “the use of tokens for the express purpose of proof”, and therefore belongs better in his first class. The other three recognition scenes which he groups in his fourth class along with that of the *Choëphori* will best be discussed later (p. 398 f.), when it will be seen that they also belong in another class.

To change the myth for dramatic purposes was questionable freedom for Aeschylus in 458 B. C. But in 413, forty-five years later, Euripides had no fear of the ancient myth before his eyes. For his didactic and psychological purposes all the minor details of the old story might be freely changed, provided he gave due notice of such changes to the audience in his formal prologue. The great cornerstones of the mythic story could not be removed. A son must slay his mother, in league with a sister. So much at least was necessary. But there need no longer be such authority in a divine command to do an unholy deed as to exact obedience. There must be lower and less ideal grounds for the matricide. In developing these grounds, on the basis of pronounced scepticism toward all the apparatus of myth and oracle that was sacred to Aeschylus, Euripides also indulges in much pungent, though highly inartistic criticism of his great predecessor's dramatic art. In his *Electra*, probably of the year 413, the scene is not within the walled city of Mycenae, for how could Orestes penetrate inside if the guilty pair of tyrants are on the watch against his coming? Nor is the tomb of Agamemnon there in the near background by the palace, but outside the city, in a lonely country place, where the royal body was cast forth with insult.

Electra is not an inmate of the palace. How could her guilty mother endure the sight of her? Worse than cast out, she has been forced to marry a rude and poverty-laden peasant, that no royal scion may be born of her to take up the task of vengeance in case Orestes should be cut off untimely. In this lowly peasant's squalid home the Electra of Euripides does menial labor, while the insults heaped upon her by the murderers lording it in her father's palace slowly ripen in her bosom a hatred so intense that Orestes, when he comes, needs no weak oracle to spur him on to the matricide, but finds sufficient spur in his sister. She would do the deed herself but for feminine lack of strength. The recognition scene between Orestes and Electra, like the action of the whole play, takes place before the hut of Electra's peasant husband. This man, contrary to the plans of Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra, is full of loyalty to the dead Agamemnon and of reverence for his daughter. He behaves himself to her "as to a queen, so that she continues virgin in his house all the days of her adversity."

The action opens with peasant husband and princess, virgin wife passing to the menial occupations of the day. Enter Orestes and Pylades. Orestes has not dared to go within the city, but has offered a lock of his hair on the distant and neglected grave of his father, and sacrificed there a sheep. He is now bent on reaching safe remove from the tyrants' watchful hate, and above all on finding his sister, in order to learn from her what the state of things in the city is, and to get necessary help from her for the deed of vengeance. Electra returns from the spring bearing on her head the water for the day's uses,—the office of slaves in her father's house. Orestes and Pylades retire, meaning, if all is favorable, to enquire of the approaching servant, as they at first regard her, where Electra dwells. Electra pauses before the hut that is her home, and in long song of lament clearly reveals her identity to the listening Orestes and Pylades, precisely as in the *Choëphori*. A band of maidens from the city, old playmates of Electra, who are to form the chorus of the play, enter the scene here, to invite Electra to join them in celebrating the maidens' festival of Hera. But Electra bitterly declines the invitation, so full of rage and grief is she at thought of her undeserved penury and the riotous iniquities of her father's murderers.

Orestes and Pylades, this indirect and artistic revelation of the identity of Electra now complete, approach. Electra would fly in

terror, but is detained by Orestes, who promises her tidings of her brother. He lives, although an outcast and in straits for daily bread, and would know by messenger how it fares with his sister. Rapid dialogue brings out all the maddening details of Electra's lot, as well as the nobility of her peasant husband. If only her brother would come back to aid her, with her own hands would she slay her mother and then welcome death.

(Orestes) " Ah, were Orestes nigh to hear that word !<sup>1</sup>

(Electra) But, stranger, though I saw, I should not know him.

(Or.) No marvel,—a child parted from a child !

(El.) One only of my friends would know him now,—

(Or.) The one who stole him out of murder's clutch ?

(El.) The aged paedagogue in service of my sire.

(Or.) And thy dead father,—hath he found a tomb ?

(El.) Such tomb as he hath found, flung forth the halls !"

Then follows a long and passionate narrative from Electra of the wrongs done her by the murderous pair, and of the insults heaped on Agamemnon's very grave by the drunken Aegisthus:

" Shame, that the sire destroyed all Phrygia's race,  
And the son singly cannot slay one man,  
Young though he be, and of a nobler sire !"

At this point the peasant husband, returning from his toil, sees his young wife in converse with two strangers, and at first is jealously angry ; but on learning that the visitors bring tidings of Orestes, is all joy and hospitality. He insists on their partaking of his poor fare, and wins a long encomium from Orestes as he and Pylades enter the hut. Electra then, with anxious housewife's trouble, scolds her spouse for asking guests inside where there is naught to eat, and sends him off in haste to the old paedagogue, who has flocks and herds near by, that he may come with store of food. Thus deſtly is the presence of the only one who can spontaneously recognize Orestes secured.

After a hymn by the waiting chorus, the old paedagogue comes laboriously in with meat and cheese and wine from his farm. He meets Electra at the door and tells her, as he gives her all the store of food, how, as he turned aside a moment to weep at Agamemnon's tomb, he found there an offering of a ram new-slain, and blood outpoured, and severed locks of hair. He

<sup>1</sup>Euripides is cited in the translation of A. S. Way.

brings some tresses of this with him. Haply it is her brother's, who has come in secret to honor his father's tomb:

"Look on the tress; yea, lay it to thine own;  
Mark if the shorn lock's color be the same."

But Electra chides the old man a fool for thinking that a young athlete's hair should be like a woman's. And like-hued hair can never argue surely common birth. Some stranger out of pity made the offering. Nay, argues the old man,

- "Set in his sandal's print thy tread, and mark  
If that foot's measure answer, child, to thine.  
(El.) How on a stony plain should there be made  
Impress of feet? Yea, if such print be there,  
Brother's and sister's foot should never match,—  
A man's and woman's; larger is the man's.  
(Paed.) Hath he not weft of thine own loom, whereby  
To know thy brother, if he should return,  
Wherein I stole him, years ago, from death?  
(El.) Know'st thou not, when Orestes fled the land,  
I was a child?—yea, had I then woven vests,  
How should that lad wear the same cloak to-day,  
Except, as grows the body, vestures grow also?"

Having thus disposed scornfully of the "tokens" by which Aeschylus has his Electra recognize her brother, Euripides sets in motion his own more rational recognition. Orestes and Pylades come out of the hut, and are presented to the old paedagogue as to the faithful servant who saved Orestes on the day of murder. Instantly, and with overwhelming joy the old man recognizes his youthful charge, and calls upon Electra to greet her brother so long desired:

- "I see Orestes, Agamemnon's son!  
(El.) What token hast thou marked that I may trust?  
(Paed.) A scar along the brow:—in his father's halls  
Chasing with thee a fawn, he fell and gashed it.  
(El.) How say'st thou?—yea, I see the mark thereof!  
(Paed.) Now art thou slow to embrace thy best-beloved?  
(El.) No, ancient, no! by this thy sign convinced  
My heart is. Thou who hast at last appeared,  
Unhoped I clasp thee in mine arms",

—and the recognition is accomplished. The paedagogue recognizes Orestes spontaneously and naturally, as Dolius recognizes Odysseus. To enable him to convince the sceptical Electra that

he is right, Euripides substitutes for the worthless "tokens" of Aeschylus a bodily "sign"—a scar, known both to the paedagogue and Electra, and conducts the proof formally and directly. Without the undramatic criticism of his predecessor, the recognition scene of Euripides would be mechanically perfect, though to gain this mechanical perfection he has freely changed the old story, as Aeschylus dared not do. And Euripides loved to criticize Aeschylus more than he cared to keep his art perfect.

A year or more after the *Electra* of Euripides was produced, Sophocles, full of years and crowned with many victories, took the same theme.<sup>1</sup> To him, as to Aeschylus, the myth was a sacred inheritance from the past, and must not be lightly changed. New details might be added to the old, but the old must not be despised and rejected altogether. His faith in a divine ordering of the lot of men was more serene than that of Aeschylus, his art more chaste and severe. Moreover he had nothing but gratitude and respect for his great predecessor. With the innovating scepticism and logical severity of Euripides he had no sympathy. His *Electra* is conducted in the main on the old Aeschylean lines, though cast in new perspective, and enriched by new and striking detail.

*Electra* lives in the royal palace of her fathers, harshly dealt with by Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra, and ever hoping against hope that Orestes, whom she had rescued from death and sent away with a trusty paedagogue, would come from Phocis and take vengeance on his father's murderers. Secret messages she had received from him, but still he tarried, and her hopes grew dim. The scene of the play, as in Aeschylus, is before the royal palace, and the tomb of Agamemnon is in the distant background. At early dawn the paedagogue appears before the palace, pointing out to Orestes and Pylades the noble home which the exile has so long yearned to see. Together they concoct their plot of vengeance. The aged paedagogue shall enter the palace pretending to be a messenger from Phocis with tidings of the death of Orestes. His extreme age will shield him from recognition. Shortly after, Orestes and Pylades shall appear at the palace gates with a funeral urn, which will be said to contain the ashes

<sup>1</sup> Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Hermes*, XVIII (1883), pp. 214-249, *Die beiden Elektren*. Jebb did not accept this view. It is, of course, really immaterial for the purpose of this paper.

of Orestes sent home for burial. When they also are admitted to the palace, the deed of vengeance shall be done. Hearing cries of wailing within the palace court,—some handmaid, as the paedagogue suggests, or possibly Electra, as Orestes thinks, they hastily withdraw to obey the strict commands of Apollo and begin their enterprise by offerings on Agamemnon's tomb. They are therefore out of hearing of the scene which follows.

Electra, free, by the happy chance of Aegisthus' absence from the palace for a while, to come out of doors, bemoans with her companions, who form the chorus of the play, the sad fortunes of her house and her own intolerable lot. Cruel treatment, and the constant sight of the murderous pair triumphing in their guilt and mocking at her hopes of Orestes' return, have made her harsh and implacable. To her enters from the palace a younger sister, Chrysothemis, a gentle foil to harsh Electra, such as Sophocles had already created in Ismene to Antigone. She is for yielding to the tyrants, and accommodates herself to their triumph, instead of angering them by hostility and resistance after the manner of Electra. The dialogue brings out in effective contrast the opposing natures of the two sisters, and also the fact that Clytaemnestra has had a portentous dream during the night just passed, and therefore sends Chrysothemis forth with funeral offerings to appease the spirit of Agamemnon. Electra and the chorus prevail upon her to cast away the offerings of Clytaemnestra, and make instead an offering of her own and Electra's hair upon the tomb, accompanied by prayers for Orestes' return. Exit Chrysothemis to visit the tomb of Agamemnon.

To Electra now enters from the palace her mother, Clytaemnestra, with an attendant bearing gifts for the image of Apollo in the immediate foreground of the scene. Mother and daughter hold angry debate, each accusing the other and justifying herself. As Clytaemnestra then makes her offering to Apollo, praying for continued freedom from harm and sorrow, whereby her dread of Orestes' return is uppermost in her mind, to them enters, as the concerted plot requires, the old paedagogue with a plausible tale of Orestes' death in the Pythian games. This seems answer to Clytaemnestra's prayers, and death to Electra's hopes. With ill-concealed joy the queen asks the messenger into the palace for entertainment, leaving Electra outside to bewail her culminated sorrow. To her enters in glad haste Chrysothemis. Orestes has returned, she cries, while yet the

false messenger's tale of Orestes' death is fresh in Electra's ears. What has she seen, Electra demands, to render her so crazed ! Whereupon Chrysothemis tells how she had found upon her father's tomb offerings already made of libations and flowers and a tress of hair freshly severed from the head. It called up in her soul the once familiar image of her brother. He alone could have made these offerings of love. This budding hope is shattered when Electra tells the tidings of the messenger, and after a vain attempt to induce her to join in wreaking vengeance on the murderers with their own women's hands, Chrysothemis is dismissed in anger.

After a brief choral song, Orestes and Pylades appear, with attendants bearing a funeral urn. In answer to their enquiries, the chorus point them to the grief-smitten Electra as representative of the palace. Orestes would have her convey within the news that men from Phocis seek Aegisthus. They bring, he says, the ashes of Orestes,

" in one small urn,  
All that is left, poor relics of the dead.  
(El.) Ah, stranger, now by all the gods I pray,  
If this urn hold him, give it in my hands,  
That I my fate and that of all my kin  
May wail and weep with these poor ashes here.  
(Or., to Att.) Bring it, and give it her, *who'er she be* ;  
At least she does not ask it as in hate,  
But is perchance a friend, or near in blood."

Then follows the matchless scene, immortal in art which it inspired as well as in the happily surviving play, where Electra, taking in her hands the urn which she believes to hold the ashes of her brother and so of all her hopes, chants forth her sorrow for that brother and those ruined hopes, and thereby reveals herself to the living brother standing before her:

" O sole memorial of his life whom most  
Of all alive I loved ! Orestes mine !  
With other thoughts I sent thee forth than those  
With which I now receive thee ! "

Orestes, amazed, assures himself that it is Electra whose sad form thus stands before him, and then of the friendship of the listening chorus. His pity for Electra touches her, whom so few pity now. He pities her because he too suffers ! " What ! ", Electra cries, " can it be thou art of kin to us ? "



- (Or.) "Put by that urn, that thou may'st hear the whole.  
 (El.) Ah, by the gods, O stranger, ask not that!  
 (Or.) Do what I bid thee, and thou shalt not err.  
 El. Yet if I hold Orestes' body here—  
 (Or.) 'Tis not Orestes, save in show of speech.  
 (El.) Where then is that poor exile's sepulchre?  
 (Or.) Nay, of the living there's no sepulchre.  
 (El.) What say'st thou, boy?  
 (Or.) No falsehood what I say.  
 (El.) And does he live?  
 (Or.) He lives if I have life.  
 (El.) What? Art thou he?  
 (Or.) Look thou upon this seal,  
 My father's once, and learn if I speak truth.  
 (El.) O blessed light! O voice! And art thou come?  
 Art here within my grasp? O dearest friends,  
 Look here on this Orestes, dead indeed  
 In feigned craft, and by that feigning saved",

—and the recognition is complete. Most of the old Aeschylean details are still there,—the palace in the city, the tomb likewise, the dream of the guilty queen, the offerings, the lock of hair. But the use of these details shows the most consummate art, and the minor additions do not break violently with tradition, and heighten artistic effect. In both plays *Electra* is recognized by Orestes without formal proof of her identity, by the indirect and most artistic method; and in both Orestes is recognized by *Electra* after proof of his identity is conveyed directly to her, in Aeschylus with minute and even ridiculous formality; in Sophocles with brief and even unessential formality.

The abrupt, mechanical appeal, by way of direct proof of his identity, which the Orestes of Sophocles makes to his father's signet-ring, is the sole imperfection in the recognition scene. It comes right in the flow of ardent feeling which is sweeping *Electra* (and the audience or reader) on to completed recognition,—completed, for the royal bearing, the tender sympathy of the disguised Orestes have already opened her heart's door to the entering in of a loved brother's personality. Indirect persuasion of *Electra* that the pretended messenger was really Orestes, either by conversation of his with Pylades or the paedagogue which *Electra* overhears, or, better still, by more emphasis of his crown-princely nature, his tender sympathy with his tortured sister, and his hatred of the foes whom she too hates above all foes, would have better satisfied modern art and a

modern audience. Let Electra say: "What? Art thou he?" and Orestes: "Yea, by my love for thee, O sister, by my mission for the death of both our foes, Electra, I am he!" Surely no modern audience would object if sister embraced long-lost brother after that. For an audience, it must be remembered, wants to have Electra recognize her brother, and knows she must, as surely as lovers in story triumph over obstacles to love. An audience so tolerant of the dramatic convention as was the Athenian audience would surely have tolerated, perhaps even have welcomed a slight *petitio principii* when long-lost brother appeals to a loving sister's intuitions. It is well, however, to remember two things. First, the "token" feature in the recognition was in the original myth. Aeschylus takes it unchanged, to the detriment of his art; Euripides casts it boldly aside and substitutes the "bodily sign",—the scar of the Odyssey; Sophocles, with his more reverent spirit, varies only slightly to "token" of royal signet-ring, and relies on this only briefly and slightly, as if out of deference to tradition. In his Oedipus the King, as we shall see (p. 402), he is able to retain the *motif* of the bodily "sign"—the pierced and swollen ankles, while eliminating completely its importance as proof. Second, Sophocles is more willing to retain the outgrown "token" feature because he knows the fondness of the keen-witted Athenian audience for exact and logical procedure in argument of any sort. For these two reasons, perhaps, Sophocles does not wholly eliminate the element of direct and formal proof by "token" from his most perfect recognition scene. It is hardly necessary to point out that the recognition scene in the Electra of Sophocles is the culminating point of the play, to which all before converges, from which all that follows gently descends to the inevitable and god-ordained issue. In the Choëphori the recognition is a mere preliminary, hastily treated, and leading up to the all-absorbing crisis of the matricide (p. 385).

Euripides probably imitated and at the same time covertly criticized this Sophoclean recognition scene in his Iphigenia among the Taurians. Here he faces a much more difficult problem, artistically speaking, than in the Electra. Iphigenia has not seen her brother since he was a babe, twenty years before, nor heard any tidings of her family or of the Trojan war. Among the savage Taurians of the Crimea she, whom the Greeks believed to have been sacrificed at Aulis, has served as priestess

of Artemis for twenty years when the exigencies of a dramatic action require mutual recognition between her and Orestes. In solving the difficult problem Euripides reaches at one point his highest level of artistic excellence and is faultless so long as he imitates creatively the highest art of Sophocles in the recognition of Iphigenia by Orestes and Pylades. Then, however, in the recognition of Orestes by Iphigenia, he not only does not eliminate the sole fault in the Sophoclean model, but intensifies it in an attempt to improve upon the model.

As priestess of Artemis in barbarian land, Iphigenia is doomed to dedicate to sacrificial death all strangers cast away upon these coasts. One night she dreams that she thus consecrates to death the sole remaining pillar of her royal father's house, which must be Orestes. And thus she reads her dream: "Dead is Orestes, since they die on whom my sacrificial sprinklings fall". As she pours funeral oblations for Orestes with her temple maidens,—Greek captives like herself, tidings are brought her that two youthful Greeks have been captured on the coast and sent to her for sacrificial dedication. These are, of course, Orestes and Pylades. Embittered by the belief her dream inspires that Orestes is dead, and by the remembrance of her betrayal by the Greeks at Aulis, Iphigenia promises herself to show no mercy to the strangers. But their youthful beauty and noble demeanor, when they are led in chains before her, make her bewail their untimely doom. The artful dialogue that follows reveals the name of Pylades to the priestess, and the home of the other,—her own home; his name the second stranger will not tell. Rightly might he be called "Unfortunate". Of the fits of madness falling on him the priestess has already heard. Slowly does she learn also from this anonymous fellow-citizen all the story of her house since she herself passed out of ken as sacrifice at Aulis,—Troy's fate, Agamemnon's murder, and the awful vengeance taken on the mother by the son. But that son lives, the stranger declares, "lives unhappy, nowhere, everywhere", and so "False dreams, avaunt! Ye were but naught! Orestes lives!" the priestess cries, revealing to the doomed youth suspicious interest in the things most near and dear to him. She will spare one of the pair, to carry a letter from her back to her friends at home, begging for rescue from this barbarous land, and goes into the temple to prepare it. After the exquisite "Contest of Friendship", in which it is decided that Pylades

take the letter home, leaving Orestes to the sacrificial death, the priestess reappears, bearing the letter. This she will read aloud, that so, in case of shipwreck and loss, its contents may be graven on the bearer's mind. Then follows the charming scene, so like the funeral urn scene in Sophocles' *Electra*, in which the identity of Iphigenia becomes clear to the listening Greeks. "This letter Iphigenia, slain at Aulis in the seeming only, sends to Orestes her dear brother, begging him to rescue her from out this cruel land where she must do such bloody service. O Orestes, come! . . . This letter, Pylades, as thou hast strictly sworn to do, take thou now to him". "Lo! 'tis an easy oath", cries Pylades, "this letter now I give to thee, Orestes, from thy sister standing here!"

Surely no more exquisite situation,—for even the impending sacrifice cannot give it the mournful solemnity of the funeral urn scene of Sophocles,—no more exquisite scene of unconscious, indirect, informal, and therefore most artistic proof of doubtful identity could be devised. So far the Sophoclean pattern has most perfect copy. But now, when Orestes, perfectly convinced that the priestess who is to sacrifice him is his long vanished sister Iphigenia, rushes forward to embrace her, the chorus interpose in horror, and the priestess turns away in suspicious incredulity, like that of Penelope in the *Odyssey*. "Proofs!" cries Iphigenia, and so Orestes sets out to prove, directly, formally, by unfailing "tokens", and knowledge of their mutual history, that he is the one he claims to be. The proof is not wrung from him indirectly by artful stratagem, as in the Penelope recognition scene, nor is the direct proof condensed, as in the *Electra* of Sophocles, into a single flashing verse,—“look thou upon this seal, My father's once, and learn if I speak truth”,—but is drawn out in wearisome cumulation. Cunning Greek woman will not be outwitted by cunning Greek man. The man must tell,—she will not set the questions even,—of mutual secrets in their mutual lives. The story of the “golden lamb of feud” wrought in embroidery by Iphigenia's hands, he knows about; also what her mother sent to Aulis as bridal gift for her, and what was sent back to that mother by her as death-token from the sacrifice; and this knowledge came to him legitimately from *Electra* in after years, since he was but a babe when Iphigenia left her home; but still the sceptic will not yield. So at last the *coup-de-grace*!

- (Or. "What I *myself* saw, this will I name for proof:  
 In our sire's halls was Pelops' ancient spear,  
 Hidden it was *within thy maiden bower*!
- (El.) Dearest Orestes, best-beloved, I clasp thee now;  
 Far from thy country, here, O love, thou art",

—and the double recognition is logically and beyond all cavil of sceptic completed. It was artistically perfect as long as the proof was conveyed indirectly and informally; it became chilling, mechanical, and calculating when the proof was brought directly and formally.

Both these recognitions are specially noted by Aristotle. The first, that of Iphigenia by Orestes by means of the letter, is placed by him in his last and highest class, since the recognition arises "from the incidents themselves", and since "it was natural that Iphigenia should wish to dispatch a letter!" The second, that of Orestes by Iphigenia, by means of direct and cumulative proof from signs and tokens, is placed in his second class, among recognitions "invented at will by the poet". Orestes, he says, makes himself known "by speaking himself, and saying what the poet, not what the plot requires". But it is clear that this second class, like his fourth (see p. 387), is not exclusive at all. All recognitions might be referred to it, since all are "invented at will by the poet", and Iphigenia, no less than Orestes, makes herself known "by speaking herself". The difference is that Iphigenia, when speaking, is not trying to prove her identity, but to fix the contents of her letter in the bearer's mind, and so, indirectly, reveals her identity. It is the indirectness of her proof which makes it artistic, and the directness of Orestes' proof which makes it "wanting in art". Similarly Philomela, in the Tereus of Sophocles, if we are to trust Aristotle, conveyed directly to her sister Procne by means of a woven story,—the "voice of the shuttle" as the poet calls it, the knowledge that she was not dead, but had been deprived of her tongue and kept in concealment by the tyrant who was husband of both the sisters. This must have led to recognition in the larger sense of the word,—recognition of the fact that a crime had been committed, and that a sister was not dead as supposed. But the proof must have been direct, by means of "tokens".

On the other hand the four recognitions placed by Aristotle in his fourth class along with that of Orestes by Electra in the Choëphori of Aeschylus, would seem, judging by what indica-

tions are given of them, to belong in the last and highest class of recognitions arising "from the incidents themselves", where the proof of identity is brought indirectly. The recognition of Orestes by Iphigenia in the play of Polyidus the Sophist, arising from the natural reflection of Orestes "So I too must die at the altar like my sister", must have been on the same level of artistic excellence as that of Iphigenia by Orestes in the play of Euripides, and simpler in its mechanism. But Polyidus doubtless felt compelled to have the other recognition,—that of Iphigenia by Orestes, follow direct proof of her identity. No other course seemed possible in immediate mutual recognition. The first only could be brought about by the indirect method. The consummate artist, therefore, will reduce this element of direct proof to a negligible minimum, as Sophocles does in his recognition of Orestes by Electra. The work of Euripides in conducting this second of two mutual recognitions is lacking in art because he does not minify, but rather amplifies the element of direct proof. In the Tydeus of Theodectes of Phaselis, we infer from Aristotle that Oeneus, the father, is recognized by his son Tydeus in consequence of his natural remark "I came to find my son, and I lose my own life". This also must have been a recognition of the highest type, arising "from the incidents themselves". Similar inferences must be drawn regarding the recognitions in the *Odysseus Disguised as a Messenger*, and the *Phineidae*, about which we know almost nothing.

In his *Helen*, a dramatic romance, Euripides follows the lead of Stesichorus, and supposes that the real Helen has been transported to Egypt, and that only her phantom has been at Troy. To Egypt comes Menelaus also, driven from his path homewards after the sack of Troy by hostile winds. Here he finds the real Helen. There is a lively scene of mutual recognition, but both are of the spontaneous, natural order, without proof demanded or given. Menelaus has only to be told by a messenger that the phantom which he has taken to be Helen for ten years has disappeared, when he is ready to embrace the real Helen. Reality and phantom had looked exactly alike:

(Men.) "Thou art very Helen, lady, to mine eyes.

(Hel.) And thou Menelaus! I know not what to say."

There remain two plays with recognition scenes for which it is not the Trojan war which gives the needed lapse of time,—the

Ion of Euripides, and the Oedipus the King of Sophocles. In both a mother recognizes a son removed from her in infancy and now come to manhood, and in both the son acknowledges the mother. In the play of Euripides, Creüsa, daughter of Erechtheus king of Athens, has exposed her child by Apollo, with all the bitterness of a woman wronged. The child is brought mysteriously to the temple of Apollo at Delphi, where it is discovered and taken in charge by the priestess, and becomes a temple servitor. The mother marries Xuthus, bringing the kingdom of Athens as her dowry. Twenty years after the secret exposure of the child, Xuthus and Creüsa visit the temple at Delphi. By command of the god, Xuthus claims the youthful temple servitor, Ion, as his son. Creüsa, in jealous rage, is moved to plot against the life of Ion, but her plot is discovered, and after she has taken refuge at the altar of the god, Ion enters with armed men in pursuit of her. He is bent on slaying his would-be murderess, when the Pythia enters with protest. She carries a cradle with contents carefully wrapped, which Ion is to take with him to Athens :

(Pyth.) " In this I found thee once, a new-born babe.

(Ion) What profit or what hurt hath this for me ?

(Pyth.) This hides the swaddling-bands that wrapped thee then.

(Ion) My mother ! clues be these for finding her ?

(Pyth.) Take them,—rest not until thou find thy mother.

(Cre.) What, O what vision see I, past all hope !

(Ion) Peace !—for thou canst be silent—as the grave.

(Cre.) Not for me silence !—Teach not me my part !

I see the ark wherein I set thee forth,—

Thee, O my child, my babbling baby then,—

In Kekrops' cave, beneath the Long Cliff's brow !

This altar will I leave, yea, though I die ",

—and the mother flings her arms round the neck of the son whom she has recognized in consequence of indirect proof by means of "tokens". Compare the case of the Tyro of Sophocles, p. 380. But the angry son will naught of this recognition, and taunts her who claims him as a son :

(Ion) " I thy beloved—whom thou would'st slay by stealth !

Cre.) Yes—yes ! my son !—Is aught to parents dearer ?

(Ion) Cease !—I shall take thee mid thy webs of guile—

(Cre.) Take me ?—ah take ! I strain thereto, my child.

( ) Void is this ark, or somewhat doth it hide ?

(Cre.) Yea, that which wrapped thee when I cast thee forth.

(Ion) Speak out and name them ere thine eyes behold.

Cre.) Yea, if I tell not, I submit to die.

- (Ion) Say on :—'tis passing strange, thy confidence !  
 (Cre.) See there the web I wove in girlhood's days.  
 (Ion) Its fashion ? Girls be ever weaving webs.  
 (Cre.) No perfect work ; 'twas but a prentice hand.  
 (Ion) The pattern tell ;—thou shalt not trick me so.  
 (Cre.) A Gorgon in the mid-threads of a shawl.  
 (Ion) O Zeus, what weird is this that dogs our steps ?  
 (Cre.) 'Tis fringed with serpents,—with the Aegis-fringe.  
 (Ion) Behold !  
 This is the web :—lo, here the oracle !  
 (Cre.) O work of girlhood's loom, so long unseen !  
 (Ion) Is there aught else ? or this thy one true shot ?  
 (Cre.) Serpents, an old device, with golden jaws—  
 (Ion) Athene's gift, who biddeth deck babes so ?  
 (Cre.) Moulded from Erichthonius' snakes of old.  
 (Ion) What use, what purpose, tell me, hath the jewel ?  
 (Cre.) A necklace for the new-born babe, my child.  
 (Ion) Even these be here. The third I long to know.  
 (Cre.) A wreath of olive set I on thee then :  
 Athene brought it first unto our rock.  
 If this be there, it hath not lost its green,  
 But blooms yet, from the sacred olive sprung.  
 (Ion) Mother ! dear mother ! glad, O glad, I fall,  
 Beholding thee, on thy cheeks gladness-flushed",

—and the triple, culminating, direct proof by means of "tokens" has overwhelmed the sceptic, with the same mechanical impeccability which triumphs in the author's *Iphigenia* where Orestes establishes his identity (see p. 397 f.). There is scarcely doubt that both scenes were popular with Athenian audiences, which enjoyed the play and counter-play of cunning ; but the element of directness in the elongated proof robs them of high artistic excellence.

The *Oedipus the King* of Sophocles is again and again instanced by Aristotle as a model in many regards, but especially in its recognition, which is placed in his last and highest class along with the recognition of *Iphigenia* by means of the letter,—the masterpiece of Euripides. The *Oedipus* is a masterpiece of accomplishment by indirect methods. With the single exception of the prophet, Tiresias, all the actors accomplish the opposite of what they seek. "The messenger", as Aristotle says (xi, 1), "comes to cheer Oedipus and free him from his alarms about his mother, but by revealing who he is, he produces the opposite effect". *Mutatis mutandis*, this is true of Creon, Jocasta, and Oedipus himself. Eager to stay the pestilence which is devas-



tating Thebes, Oedipus the King sends Creon to Delphi for advice. Purge the land of murder, is the oracle's command; for, as Creon explains, Laius the King had been slain on the road to Delphi by murderers, as the sole surviving servant of his retinue testified. Oedipus, in prompt obedience to the oracle, makes proclamation against the murderer, laying him under heavy ban and curse. Tiresias, consulted and angered, declares that Oedipus himself is the murderer, and worse. Creon is accused of complicity with Tiresias in a scheme to dethrone Oedipus. Jocasta, intervening to calm the quarrel, attempts to relieve the mind of Oedipus by telling him of the oracle that Laius should die by the hands of his son, in consequence of which her son by Laius had been exposed to death in infancy. And Laius had died at the hands of robbers at a place where three ways met. At a place where three ways met Oedipus had slain a man, and the servant of Laius, who had left Thebes at once on the appearance there of Oedipus, must be summoned to decide whether this man whom Oedipus slew was Laius the King. While he is coming, Oedipus tells Jocasta how, troubled by an accusation that he was not the real son of Polybus and Merope of Corinth, he had sought knowledge of the matter from the god at Delphi, had been denied the knowledge, and threatened with the awful doom of slaying the father who begat him and wedding the mother who bare him. Wherefore he had fled his home of Corinth, and, fleeing, had slain an aged, princely man. Were that man Laius, who so vile as Oedipus!—self-accursed, wedded to the wife of the man he slew, and exiled from his own land, or else he must slay his father and wed his mother. A messenger from Corinth brings to Jocasta tidings of the death of Polybus which she exultantly imparts to Oedipus. Oracles, then, are naught! But the mother of Oedipus still lives in Corinth, and touching her too the oracle made dreadful prophecy. Nay, says the messenger from Corinth, while Jocasta's exultation slowly changes to black despair, Oedipus was not the son of Merope. He himself, the messenger, had once received him, a babe exposed for death, from a servant of the house of Laius. Here Jocasta recognizes the awful truth, even without the slight influence of the "sign" of the swollen ankles, and when the servant of Laius arrives and reluctantly confesses that the babe which he had given the Corinthian was from Jocasta's hands, given up for death, that prophecy of patricide might

be forestalled, Oedipus also recognizes the awful truth. Both recognitions,—that of Jocasta and that of Oedipus, are in consequence of proof indirectly conveyed, and the influence of the “sign” is reduced to a negligible minimum. And both recognitions, when compared, for instance, with those of the *Ion*, are less recognitions of persons than of situations. They are changes “from ignorance to knowledge”, recognitions of “whether a person has done a thing or not.” Nor are the recognitions immediately mutual in the *Oedipus*.

We have seen, then, that of Aristotle’s five classes of recognitions, three,—the second, third, and fourth, must fall away as non-exclusive; and that the principle of directness or indirectness in conveying the proofs of personal identity, admitted to be important by Aristotle, must be made supreme as a principle of classification. Recognitions of the highest art are the result of proof of identity conveyed indirectly, preferably without use of “signs and tokens”, although by no means necessarily so.

#### DRAMATIC RECOGNITIONS.

##### I. Spontaneous, without “delay”, without proof (*ἀνευ πίστεως*),

(Eur.)	Orestes by Paedagogue	( 4 )	p. 390
( “ )	Helen by Menelaus	(10)	p. 399
( “ )	Menelaus by Helen	(11)	“

##### II. Induced by proof (*ἐκ πίστεως*),

###### A. Direct and formal, by means of “signs” (*διὰ σημείων*),

(Aesch.)	Orestes by Electra	( 2 )	p. 386 f.
(Eur.)	“ “ “	( 5 )	p. 390 f.
(Soph.)	“ “ “	( 6 )	p. 394
(Eur.)	Orestes by Iphigenia	( 9 )	p. 397 f.
( “ )	Creüsa by Ion	(13)	p. 400 f.
(Soph.)	[Philomela by Procne (?)]		p. 398

###### B. Indirect, informal and artistic, *διὰ εἰκότων, ἐκ περιπετείας*,

###### (a) By means of “signs”,

(Eur.)	Ion by Creüsa	(12)	p. 400
(?)	[Odysseus Disguised]		p. 399
(Soph.)	[Her children by Tyro]		p. 380, 400
(Carc.)	[Thyestes by ?]		p. 380
(?)	[ <i>Sparti</i> by ?]		“

(b) Without the use of "signs" (*ἀνευ σημείων*),

(Aesch.)	Electra by Orestes	( 1)	p. 386
(Eur.)	" " "	( 3)	p. 388
(Soph.)	" " "	( 7)	p. 393
(Eur.)	Iphigenia by Orestes	( 8)	p. 397
(Soph.)	Oedipus by Jocasta	(14)	p. 402 f.
( " )	Jocasta by Oedipus	(15)	"
(Pol.)	[Orestes by Iphigenia]		p. 399
(The.)	[Oeneus by Tydeus]		p. "
(?)	[Characters in the <i>Phineidae</i> ]		"
(Dic.)	[Teucer by Eurysaces]		p. 374

B. PERRIN.